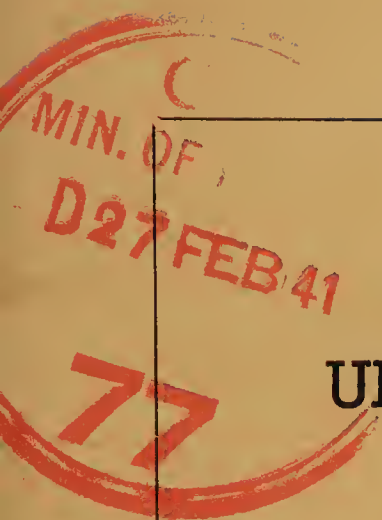


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STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORTS

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH

AND

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR 1939

M. CANE TYP STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1939.

GENTLEMEN,

The Registrar-General desired all Medical Officers of Health to withhold their reports until the reception of statistical data from him, warning them that, owing to war conditions, they must not be expected before July; it was not till October that these data were received. So, following the example of the County Medical Officer in his last Annual Report, I have, on some matters, brought this Report up to date of issue.

Many evacuees, children and others, have come to this district owing to war conditions, but these are not included in the returns of the Registrar-General.

The absence on military service, both male and female, of young adults ordinarily resident in the district, must affect to some extent the reliability of the returns for comparison with previous years.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Medical Officer of Health (part time): E. STANLEY ROBINSON.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector:

L. H. POOLE, M.I.M.C.E., C.R.S.I.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector:

F. PERKINS (now on war service).

About 30 men are employed by the Council in scavenging and other sanitary work.

R. S. MACARTHUR, M.D. (a member of the Council) was appointed in July, 1940, to undertake (without salary) all duties appertaining to A.R.P. service.

Clerk: A. D. CAPEL LOFT, who resigned on account of ill health in March, 1940; in November, 1940, MR. J. W. MOFFITT was appointed Clerk, after acting as substitute for Mr. Loft since his resignation.

Housing Manager: W. ROWBOTHAM.

District Nurses (all midwives): Four (one part time).

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	3,204
Registrar-General's estimate of:	
(a) Resident population, mid-1939	7,969
(b) Average population appropriate to the calculation of death rates	8,032
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939) according to Rate Books	2,305
Rateable value and sum represented by a 1d. rate	£83,344 £329

Extracts from vital statistics of the year, births and deaths,
after correction for inward and outward transfers as
furnished by the Registrar-General:

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births: Legitimate	135	69	66
Illegitimate	2	0	2
Stillbirths	6	4	2
Deaths	83	43	40
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population mid-1939			17.0
Local 126			15.8
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births			17.1
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated average population			13.3
Deaths from puerperal causes			Nil
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—			
All infants per 1,000 live births.....			50
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births			50
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births			0
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)			17
,, Measles (all ages)			0
,, Whooping Cough (all ages)			0
,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)			0

Births.—All births of patients occurring in the Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital, non-resident in the district, are excluded, though, owing to the postal address of some non-residents being Stourport-on-Severn, some have been inadvertently included by the Registrar-General.

Registrar-General's data:

Male 69, Female 68, Total 137 Rate 17.1

Local Register :

Male 62, Female 62, Total 126 Rate 15.8

Birth Rate of England and Wales 15

One-third of the infants born were born in hospital.

Two-thirds at their own homes.

Deaths.—Males 43, Females 40, Total 83; Death Rate 13.3 (1938, 12.2). Death Rate for England and Wales, 12.1.

Infant Mortality, 50. England and Wales, 50.

Deaths of non-residents occurring in the district 6

Deaths of residents occurring outside the district 20

These occurred, except in two instances, at the Public Assistance Institution, in General and Mental Hospitals and Tuberculosis Sanatoria.

The largest number of deaths were registered as due to heart disease: 15 were over 70 and six over 80, so that organ seems to have stood up to its job very well. Of the 12 registered as due to myocardial degeneration, most of them, 20 years ago, would have been registered as due to senility. Next in number were deaths due to cancer (17). It is worth noting that six of these were over 70 and two over 80.

Five deaths were due to violence: four of these were suicides, two male, two female. Influenza caused four deaths, Respiratory disease ten, Apoplexy five, Tuberculosis three, Premature Birth and congenital defects four.

There is no obvious reason for the death rate of the district exceeding that of England and Wales, as it usually does; the same may be said of the rate of Infant Mortality. If it be due to the low standard of housing of the working classes and overcrowding, an improvement may be expected in the near future.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The war has profoundly altered these, though on the whole the public health has withstood the strain of rationing, longer hours of work, and the depressing effect of the black-out remarkably well; it is as good as before the war.

A considerable number of men—and to a lesser extent women—are absent on military service.

The Fire Brigade has been re-organised and greatly enlarged, and is very efficient; the A.R.P. service has been established, though still rather below strength; also the Home Guard. The Women's Voluntary Service is doing remarkably good work.

A large number of children evacuated from other districts, together with many other voluntary evacuees, have been made welcome, and absorbed into our social life.

Unemployment is almost non-existent, and the number receiving Public Assistance has diminished.

The public have subscribed liberally to War Loan and War Savings Certificates.

The increased cost of living presses heavily on households with large families, though free or cheap milk to school-children, expectant and nursing mothers and sick persons, helps to lessen the strain.,

The Government have expressed their intention to bring forward a scheme of family allowances; this ought to have been done long ago.

Meanwhile, public work has to go on as best it can.

The York Street canal bridge is finished, and when the Lion Hill bottle-neck has been dealt with, traffic through the centre of the town will be considerably relieved.

A new factory has been established on the site of the Textile Works, and the Power Station and Steatite Porcelain works have been extended.

The Council purchased the stables of the derelict Moor Hall for temporarily storing salvage, and other purposes. As it stands in the middle of residential property, it is to be hoped it will be demolished when the war is over.

A number of villa residences have been built at the Worcester Street and Burlish ends of Bewdley Road; they are all occupied.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Laboratory Services.—The County Council have arranged to supplement this service during the war.

Ambulance Facilities.—The Council have, for several years, had an agreement with the Kidderminster Corporation for the use of their ambulance. With the advent of the war it seemed possible that this might prove insufficient and the County Council has loaned two—adapted—ambulances for A.R.P. work, and allows them to be used—with some restrictions—for civil purposes, the necessary equipment being provided by the District Council. The County Council reserves the right to recall these vehicles if it considers they are more urgently required elsewhere in the county. It is to be hoped that in the near future the Council will possess an up-to-date ambulance of its own.

Home Nursing.—This should be a State service, for it is the most directly valuable of all Public Health services. Instead of which, out of an approximate income of eight hundred pounds, the County Council grants are less than two hundred and fifty pounds, the District Council allows

a house rent free, though not the rates, the rest has to be raised by fees and, chiefly, voluntary contributions. The Stourport and Wilden District Association and the Astley and Areley Kings Nursing Association employ three Nurses, all of whom are midwives in Stourport, and one, part-time, nurse midwife in Areley Kings. Their duties under the County Council, include attending women and babies before, during, and after confinement; attending school medical inspections, regular visits to cases of tuberculosis, mental defects and ailing children in their homes. Within the last year, with the co-operation of the Education Authority, a nurse attends daily at the school and cases of minor ailments not bad enough to need a doctor's services. Last year they paid over 2,000 visits to infants, giving advice when necessary and the sending more serious cases to a doctor. Most of the visiting is done walking or cycling, and in all weathers. Often patients need more than one visit a day, and many of the nurses' nights are disturbed by calls. For this strenuous life they don't receive enough pay to ensure comfort in retirement, though they do receive an inadequate pension, to which they have to contribute while in work. I don't believe the public realise the amount of work they do, nor how meagre their emolument. The work of the Associations is managed by two secretaries and committees of ladies, whose services are entirely voluntary; the secretaries have to devote a great deal of time to their duties. Other ladies undertake the thankless—and sometimes unpleasant—job of collecting subscriptions. Both Associations ended the year with a deficit; it is to be hoped that further and generous help will be forthcoming from the Public Health Authorities.

Public Mortuary.—For years the present building has been acknowledged to be ill-adapted for the purpose. Early in the year the Council requested me to suggest any possible improvements, but the situation, means of access, lighting, and limited space, convinced me that no real improvements were practicable.

I visited many mortuaries in the county, and, eventually, with the Sanitary Inspector and the Chairman of the Health Committee, one at the Mary Stevens Maternity Hospital. We decided that, with some modifications a similar building would be suitable for this district. There, at present, the matter stands.

For the accommodation of A.R.P. casualties the Council decided to adapt part of the Moor Hall stables, lately purchased by the Council, which can hardly be considered ideal for the purpose.

The Ministry of Health suggested that the present mortuary might be altered to suit the Council's purpose, but the accommodation there is very limited, not more than half a dozen corpses could in decency lie therein.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.—The water from Bewdley is in every way satisfactory; fresh financial arrangements have had to be made; partly in helping to pay for the cost of chlorinisation insisted on by the Ministry of Health.

The mains for a service in Areley Kings have been laid for some months, but house connections are in abeyance until the sewers are available; otherwise the cesspools would certainly overflow as, indeed, some of them do now in rainy weather.

A service has also been laid to Lower Heath for the benefit of the Petrol Stations; house property has not been connected as the area is water-logged and there are no sewers. A standpipe for providing drinking water has been erected.

Drainage and Sewerage.—The war has seriously hindered the progress of the Sewage Scheme, though, after an enquiry held by the Ministry of Health, it was not postponed till after the war, the fate of so many other schemes. Owing to lack of labour and materials, the hope of Areley Kings residents that their homes might soon be connected with the sewer, already laid, and the sewage dealt with temporarily on the Sands Farm is, for the present, frustrated.

Inspection of the district is carried out as regularly as circumstances permit.

Refuse Disposal.—The site on the Kidderminster Road being no longer available, the Council have acquired another on a water-logged field adjoining Hartlebury Common, which should last for several years.

Complaints were received from tenants of cottages in Foundry Street that all refuse had to be carried through the living rooms from backyard to lorry; the wives, in particular objecting because the smell "hung about" their homes, besides which it was not nice to have men with dirty boots trapesing over the floors, particularly in wet weather. It took over a year and an order by the Council to get the responsible person—a member of the Council—to remedy this disgusting state of affairs. Pail and cesspool contents are dealt with on surrounding farms.

Salvage.—As the population of the district is below 10,000, there is no compulsory system of salvage, though a modified system is in force. Paper, rags, old iron, bottles, and bones, are collected, but no tins, of which there are many thousands in the year. For a time this was stored in and around the Moor Hall stables, together with the nightsoil cart and appurtenances. Complaints were received from residents in adjoining houses, and other arrangements have been made; there is difficulty in getting rid of the material as quickly as desirable. The scavengers receive half the money. Co-operation with adjoining districts would enable more saleable material to be utilised.

Camping Grounds and Houseboats.—Owing to inclement weather (1939) neither were occupied as much as usual. The camps were visited before and during occupation and were generally clean and tidy. The owners were interviewed, informed of requirements and promised to carry them out.

Public Lavatories.—The lack of a public lavatory near the riverside has led to many unpleasant incidents for years past. There is now a reasonable prospect of the acquisition of an excellent site at the back of the Bridge Inn. A really good building with accommodation for both sexes would not only fulfil a long felt want, but prove a paying proposition, at any rate in the summer months when the influx of visitors is considerable. A cottage for the accommodation of attendants would not materially increase the cost. The urinal at the top of Swan Passage is directly under the windows of the Swan Hotel; it was, however, there before the bedrooms were built: I opposed the plans.

Swimming Baths.—The prospect of this valuable health service seems more remote than ever. The Ministry of Health held an enquiry and approved a scheme for Swimming Baths on the River Severn, which the Council rejected. Consequently many hundreds of schoolchildren and others lost the opportunity of learning to swim which had been available for their predecessors for 30 years. Pollution of the river—the ostensible reason for rejection—was chiefly sentimental and, in the opinion of the Ministry's Inspector, was overwhelmingly counterbalanced by the benefit of the schoolchildren learning to swim. Moreover, the County Council had undertaken to support any steps taken by the District Council to abate the nuisance.

Smoke Abatement.—In July, 1938, complaints were received from the tenants of cottages of smoke from a factory opposite. The Inspector reported: "I found the

complaint was fully justified. The windows of two cottages immediately opposite the melting furnace were covered with a dense, greasy, blueish coloured haze; the shrubs and flowers in the garden were either dead, withered or stunted in growth. The tenants stated that they were unable to keep the windows clean, and when the wind was from the east, fumes of burnt oil entered their houses." In February, 1939, a second complaint was received, stating "still nothing has been done to alleviate the distress; the fumes from the works have made the windows impossible to see through for months, to say nothing about the gardens. We are forced to let them go wild, as it is waste of money to plant them. And, above all, what about our health? Is that going to be affected also, as we are obliged to keep our windows closed now?" In April, another complaint: "May we call your attention again to the nuisance we are having to tolerate from the fumes," etc., etc. The nuisance was not abated till July, 1939. Meanwhile, the tenants said: "Nobody has expressed regret for the nuisance or offered compensation to make good." In November, 1940, the blue haze still covers the windows, obscuring light. The person responsible for this condition is a member of the Council.

Schools.—The sanitary condition and water supply are satisfactory, though, until the sewage system is in operation, Areley Kings and Wilden Schools must depend on the pail system. Mild epidemics of Mumps and Chicken-pox occurred during the year, but school closure was not considered necessary and the general health of the children has been good.

The Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital.—There are 12 beds in the General Wards and six Private Wards.

Cases admitted in 1939	.....	.....	.....	363
Women delivered	.....	.....	.....	320
Infants born alive	.....	.....	.....	311
Infants Stillborn	.....	.....	.....	9
Maternal Deaths	.....	.....	.....	0
Infant Deaths	.....	.....	.....	3
Cases of Puerperal Pyrexia	.....	.....	.....	6
Cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum	.....	.....	.....	3

Ante-natal Clinics are held twice weekly, the average attendance is 12.

The Nursing Association holds Maternity and Infant Welfare Clinics in the Hospital Annexe for Out-patients twice a month.

Hospitals.—The only hospital in the district is the Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital.

The Public Assistance Hospital is at Kidderminster, and there are hospitals in the county for the treatment of Mental and Tubercular Disease. Other patients needing hospital treatment go to Kidderminster, Worcester, and Birmingham.

HOUSING.

When I was appointed Medical Officer of Health 47 years ago, Local Authorities, County Councils—which had only lately been elected—and even Parliament itself, were content to let the working classes, who could not help themselves, live in conditions that were a disgrace to civilisation.

The rates of Infant Mortality and Tuberculosis were lamentably high and epidemic disease was apt to assume a malignant type.

Families had to be brought up in overcrowded houses and wages were too low to allow the children to be properly fed and clothed.

At that time members of Local Authorities—Clergy, Doctors, Wealthy Manufacturers and Tradesmen—kept their eyes shut to existing conditions and calmly pocketed the rents for houses that were hardly fit for a pig to live in.

Rents were usually collected by agents who were paid on commission who, naturally, were not too ready to approve and pass on to the landlords applications for repairs or improvements, arguing that the “low rents wouldn’t allow it.”

Many of the landlords were men of good repute, living strictly moral lives, regular attendants at church or chapel, subscribing liberally to charity, universally regarded, and respected as model citizens.

During my early years of office there was a list of over a hundred insanitary houses in which members of the local authority were directly or indirectly interested.

What wonder that the reports of Sanitary Officials were ignored and even regarded as impertinences!

It was not till the war that medical inspection of recruits opened the eyes of the Government to the poor physical development of the working classes and the conditions in which they were living. It was decided that houses must be built “fit for heroes to live in.” Local Authorities were told to see to it.

In 1920, 48 houses were built in Stourport and called Park Crescent. In accordance with instructions of the Government the first eight were really good houses, but unfortunately the cost seemed to be prohibitive and orders were issued that plans must be cut down, and the rest were built of unbecoming cement (eventually designated Grey Town); they were cramped, too small for comfort (too small to swing a cat in). However, they were soon occupied and the need for more became evident.

In 1925, 15 houses, rather more roomy, were built in Minster Road and Warwick Street.

And still the demand exceeded the supply.

In 1928, 46 more houses were built and became Olive Grove, and the call for more was as urgent as ever.

In 1931, 20 more houses were built in Prospect Road. False economy resulted in some being built too close to and under the brow of a hill; some of the rooms were too dark.

And still more houses were needed.

In 1934, 80 more were built in Vernon Road and Tan Lane; they were soon filled.

By this time the working man began to realise the benefits of amenities not hitherto available—a water supply indoors and adjacent water-closets—and demanded more houses embodying these improvements.

In 1936, 48 were built (Bullus Road); they, too, were soon filled.

And, at last, the Government really woke up, the Housing Act was passed and Local Authorities forced to take further action.

The homes of the working classes were visited, inspected by and reported on by the Council's Sanitary Officers—no mean task. A large number were found to be unfit for human habitation and scheduled for demolition or reconditioning.

Many were found to be overcrowded.

A certain number of these condemned houses proved to be owned by members of the Council.

The occupants of these condemned houses had to be re-housed.

Meanwhile the Government, perhaps mistrusting the initiative of Local Authorities, decided to send Inspectors from the Ministry of Health; every condemned house and usually every room in the house was inspected and, with two or three insignificant exceptions, confirmed the reports of the Sanitary Officials.

More houses still were obviously needed.

At the close of the Inspector's visit he urged further action on the part of the Sanitary Officials; he had noted—but not visited officially—a good deal of unsatisfactory property which was not included in the list supplied; he anticipated another visit in the not too distant future.

Meanwhile, the Council had engaged a well-known architect to prepare plans for another Housing Scheme on the Manor Farm site.

This scheme was adopted by the Council (for 108 houses), with certain modifications, on the ground of expense.

About half were completed by the end of 1939 and the rest by the middle of 1940.

These new homes contrast favourably with those of any previous scheme and with those of many other schemes I have visited. They are very good indeed, and the tenants are delighted.

Certain cottages in Areley Kings (on the Dunley and Martley roads) were built by the Martley Rural District Council, and afterwards taken over by the Council when the Stourport-on-Severn District was extended.,

There is a lack of small houses suitable for old couples or pensioners, for which the land acquired by the Council in Parkes Passage might be utilised.

The Housing Manager reports that there are 383 Council houses at present; it is rarely that one becomes vacant and available for re-letting.

There is a waiting list of over 400.

In February, 1938, a communication was received from the Ministry of Health asking the Council to consider building houses to accommodate some of the employees at Hartlebury, Elmley Lovett, and Rushock Storage Department of the Air Ministry. They would be occupied by skilled artisans earning wages from 50s. to £5 a week.

The Council replied, agreeing to place a certain number of houses of the new housing scheme, on which the Council had already decided, at the disposal of the Air Ministry.

The question of site had to be decided, and the opinion of the Sanitary Officers was asked for.

Seven sites were suggested, which were dealt with fully in my Annual Report for 1937.

On account of their easy access to the Air Force Depot, the Wilden sites—both excellent—were recommended. Twenty-five applications for houses had been received from the employees at the Depot.

The Council, however, ignored the interest of Air Force Depot employees and decided on the Walshes Farm site, which, with one exception, was the farthest away of all the suggested sites. This meant that instead of being within

easy distance ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles) of their work, the employees would have to travel at least twice that distance, passing through the town and over Severn Bridge—no small matter at the end of a day's work, to say nothing of cost of transport and loss of time.

The Walshes Farm site was the only one put before the Ministry for approval; no possible alternative site was mentioned. When war broke out and transport became more difficult, with longer hours of work and the black-out to be reckoned with, the Walshes Farm site became impracticable for Air Force employees. The Ministry, in being made aware of this fact, may have been influenced in their decision to refuse approval to the scheme being proceeded with during the war; and there the matter stands at present. As the Ministry's Inspector noticed, there is still a good deal of old property in the district lacking the amenities of a modern working man's home in the matter of indoor water supply and sanitary accommodation; indeed nearly bad enough to be condemned. With the completion of the Walshes Farm scheme, I hoped that the tenants of such property would gradually drift from thence to the new houses; alternatively, to keep their tenants, the landlords would be compelled to raise the standard of comfort.

Allotments.—The Housing Manager reports that he has been successful in letting all allotments administered by the Council, including a new site at Olive Grove for 32, and also those at Areley Kings which ran to waste for so long. Some have been supplied with water, and a hut for the storage of tools and as a refuge in bad weather. Not all, however, are so provided.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

During the year the following cases of Infectious Disease were notified: Chicken-pox 138, Scarlatina 18, Diphtheria 2, Enteric Fever (paratyphoid B.) 3, Puerperal Pyrexia 6, Ophthalmia Neonatorum 3, Erysipelas 3, Pneumonia 4.

Chicken-pox.—This was epidemic among schoolchildren (and contacts) during the first seven months of the year, with a recrudescence in November and December; doubtless many cases escaped notification. The type was generally mild, many children attended school with the rash out. School closure was not considered necessary.

Scarlatina.—The majority of the cases were school-children: Infants 5, Seniors 1, Junior Boys 3, Junior Girls 3.

A second case occurred in two households, one developed the disease the day after discharge from hospital, one (a

woman of 61) caught it while nursing a grandchild; the type was generally mild.

Two cases were removed to hospital, one because the mother was near confinement, the other because the only spare room was occupied by a bed-ridden invalid; the rest were treated at home.

Diphtheria.—Two cases only were notified, both probably contracted the disease outside the district; they were removed to hospital and made good recoveries.

Immunisation.—The question of resuming the clinics held the previous year (when between 200 and 300 were inoculated) was discussed with the County Medical Officer, who advised that as the Public Health Staff of the county was fully occupied with A.R.P. work, it was wiser to postpone them.

However, they were resumed in 1940, when between 300 and 400 were inoculated.

Enteric Fever.—The three cases notified formed part of a party of schoolboys who visited France during the Easter holidays; though neither of them developed clinical symptoms, laboratory reports certified them to be infected and the parents were persuaded to allow them to be sent to hospital until they were free of infection. The County Medical Officer may be congratulated on the successful result of his prompt initiative in dealing with conditions that might have proved serious. The boys spoke gratefully of the kind treatment received from the hospital staff, which lightened a tedious convalescence, for none of them were ill.

Pneumonia.—Four cases were notified.

Puerperal Pyrexia.—Six cases were notified, all, except one, being patients at the Lucy Baldwin Hospital.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—Three cases were notified, all patients in the Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital. There was no permanent disability.

Influenza.—This was epidemic in the early months of the year; it affected chiefly adolescents and adults. The type was generally mild and complications infrequent; there was four deaths, all old folk.

Mumps was epidemic in the summer among the school-children; the type was much milder than it used to be 20 years ago, very few were really ill and many went to school. The schools were not closed.

Measles and Whooping Cough were made notifiable in November, 1939. No cases were notified, but in 1940 there were epidemics of both diseases.

In November, 1939, arrangements were made for treating cases of infectious disease at the Smallpox Hospital at Tolladine.

TUBERCULOSIS, 1939.

At the end of the year there were 32 cases of Tuberculosis residing in the district, one fewer than at the end of the previous year :—

	<i>Pulmonary</i>				<i>Non-pulmonary</i>			
	M.	F.	T.		M.	F.	T.	T.
January 1st	16	8	24	....	3	6	9	.... 33
December 31st	14	9	23	....	2	7	9	... 32

Number of New Cases notified, 4. One old case was restored to the register.

Number of deaths registered, 3.

Cases admitted to a Sanatorium, 5.

Cases discharged from a Sanatorium, 5 (including one death).

Cases reported recovered, 3.

After-care Committee.—This Committee, elected early in 1937, has, for certain reasons, not yet functioned. I feel sure that regular visits by kindly disposed, sympathetic, and tactful persons would do much to ease the lives of tuberculous patients; those capable of recovery would be aided in their efforts; those doomed to die might be relieved and comforted during the last weary months of waiting for the end. Supervision in the matters of food and clothing, help in applications for relief from Public Assistance and other sources, not only of patients but also contacts, would prove a valuable contribution to the Public Health of the community, especially during the war, when the powers of resistance to disease are below normal. Occasional visits by tuberculosis officers and district nurses are of little real value in comparison.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.—Most of the supply comes from outside the district, but there is an excellent modern plant at Wood Green Farm. Most of it is delivered in bottles.

The County Council have appointed an Officer whose duty is to visit and inspect all dairies and milk-producing cows throughout the county.

Meat.—The meat supply is very good; slaughterhouses and shops are visited regularly; no complaints were received.

Inspections of the Salvage Depot made it evident that a very considerable quantity of tinned and bottled meat and fruit is consumed in the district. No case of food poisoning was reported.

A.R.P.—At first considerable apathy was shewn by the public in respect to this service. In July, Dr. MacArthur, a member of the Council, undertook entire charge, without remuneration, which relieved the Medical Officer of Health of a great deal of work and even more responsibility. Never was the action of the Council more welcome to its obedient servant.

EVACUATION.

The report of the Evacuation Officer is attached. It shows that in the beginning considerable apathy was displayed by the people affected. It is very different now.

September, 1939 :

Unaccompanied Children	.....	.....	.....	219
Teachers and Helpers.....	.....	.....	.....	60
Mothers .....	.....	.....	.....	21
Accompanied Children	.....	.....	.....	30
Others (Blind, Cripples, etc.)	.....	.....	.....	5
Unaccompanied Children from other areas				7

On October 12th :

Unaccompanied Children	38
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November 1st, 1940 :

Unaccompanied Children	38
Teachers	1
Helpers	0
Mothers	1
Accompanied Children	.....	.....	.....	3

Privately Billeted under the Government Scheme :

Children	.....	.....	.....	.....	35
Adults	.....	.....	.....	.....	33

The report would not be complete without the usual reference to the Level Railway Crossing and the Kidderminster Sewage Farm nuisance, though there is now a prospect of relief in the not too distant future of the latter; both were referred to in my first annual report 47 years ago. Other amenities which will have to be brought to your notice again after the war include :

The need for more burial accommodation (the late Vicar estimated that the present Churchyard would be filled in three or four years).

A public car park near the river.

A 'bus shelter for waiting passengers at the Midland
"Red" 'Bus Station.

A public abattoir or the removal of slaughterhouses
which are close to house property.

Accommodation and Shelters for Visitors in bad
weather by the riverside.

Lavatory accommodation by the riverside has already
been mentioned as urgent.

An undoubted right of way down the riverside to
Redstone Caves should be confirmed.

In conclusion, I wish to express my profound regret
at the enforced resignation, through illness, of your Clerk,
Mr. A. D. Capel Loft. Though our views on local politics
were often—I might say, usually—miles apart and he had
a peculiarly trenchant way of expressing his, we never
allowed our divergent views to affect our friendship.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. STANLEY ROBINSON.

November 22nd, 1940.

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the Year 1939

THE COUNCIL HOUSE,
STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Stourport-on-Severn
Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report of the work carried out during the year ended 31st December, 1939.

INSPECTIONS AND NOTICES.

During the year 546 visits of inspection and re-inspection were paid to houses and other premises under the various Acts, Byelaws, and Regulations in connection with housing, abatement of nuisances, infectious disease, etc. It was not found necessary to resort to legal proceedings during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND DISINFECTION.

Details of the various notifiable diseases are given in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health, and the table below shows the number of certain types as compared with those for 1938

Scarlet Fever	.....	18	as against	17	in 1938.
Diphtheria	.....	2	as against	2	in 1938
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	.....	3			

Disinfection and cleansing was carried out in 20 cases. As in previous years inspections, the supply of disinfectant and printed instructions has been continued.

REFUSE SCAVENGING.

This work has again been regularly and systematically carried out by the Council's workmen and details of the work are as follows :—

<i>Dry Refuse</i>		<i>Liquid Refuse</i>	
Dust Bins emptied	126,388	Cesspools emptied	256
Loads removed	..... 1,200	Middens emptied.....	67
		Pails emptied	..... 16,909
		Loads removed	..... 1,715

An S. and D. Freighter was purchased for collection purposes and was brought into use on the 1st July. This vehicle was of larger capacity than the previous lorry used for this purpose, with the result that although 5,128 more bins were dealt with than in the previous year, the loads removed were 382 less.

Thirty-three additional loads of liquid refuse were disposed of as compared with 1938.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

The dairies, cowsheds, and milk shops were inspected when the limewashing of the premises and the cleaning of the milk vessels was found to have received attention.

Bakehouses and slaughterhouses were inspected regularly; no complaints.

CANAL BOATS.

I beg to report that during the year ended the 31st December last, 13 Canal Boats were inspected. It was found that many of the same boats were regularly using the canal and basins and these were therefore only re-inspected at intervals. The persons occupying the boats were generally of a strong, healthy type, and no case of illness was discovered. neither was any case of infectious disease notified from among them. The requirements as to cleanliness, ventilation, repair, etc., were found to have been carried out, and no cause for complaint arose.

No applications for registration were received during the year.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are no common lodging houses in the district.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

No offensive trades were established during the year

WATER SUPPLY.

The total consumption of water for all purposes as registered by the meters at Mount Pleasant during the year amounted to 100,801,000 gallons, which was an increase of 8,641,000 gallons as compared with that for 1938.

Notices were given in respect of 72 defective fittings which were permitting water to run to waste. Some 180 taps were re-washed free of cost, in order to reduce waste from this source.

HOUSING.

The remaining 62 houses on the Manor Farm Housing Estate were completed by the Council and 42 houses were erected by private enterprise during the year.

Forty-two houses were condemned as the result of action taken under the Housing Act, 1936.

The question of overcrowding has received attention and 20 cases were abated by re-housing on the Manor Farm Estate.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

Fourteen applications for the registration of premises used in connection with the manufacture or sale of ice-cream, preserved food, etc., were granted.

Four applications for grant or renewal of a licence to keep premises as a slaughterhouse were dealt with.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

All the premises included under the above Act have been inspected during the year and certificates as to means of escape in case of fire granted in certain cases.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

LEWIS H. POOLE,

Sanitary Inspector.

